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CAP AND BELLS

BY

SAMUEL MINTURN PECK

"*I only wear the cap and bells.*"
FREDERICK LOCKER

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TO MY FATHER AND MOTHER.

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Beneath the Cap and Bells to-day
With lightsome heart I lead the way
To quips and games and jollity:
Come, Gallants, let your laughter be
The guerdon of the frolic fray.

In camp and court, in woods of May,
Still Folly holds her merry sway,
The world's a jest. Come laugh with me
Beneath the Cap and Bells.

What songs we'll sing! What pranks we'll play!
But hold, good Sirs—your pardon, pray,
If sadder notes than those of glee
Should mingle with our minstrelsie:
The jester is not always gay
Beneath the Cap and Bells.

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I WONDER WHAT MAUD WILL SAY!

DEAR Harry, I will not dissemble,
A candid confession is best ;
My fate—but alas, how I tremble !—
My fate I must put to the test :
This morning I gathered in sadness
A strand from my locks slightly gray ;
To delay any longer were madness—
I wonder what Maud will say !

The deed it were well to do quickly,—
Macbeth makes a kindred remark :
I wonder if Mac felt as sickly
When he carved the old king in the dark !

The fellows who marry all do it,
But what is the usual way?
Heigho! don't I wish I were through it!
I wonder what Maud will say!

Pray advise. Would you fix up a letter
With rhymes about roses and trees?
To tell it perchance would be better:
Alas, must I get on my knees?
No; kneeling is now out of fashion
Except in a novel or play.
Ah, love is a Protean passion!
I wonder what Maud will say!

Would you give her a pug or a pony,
A picture or only a book;
A novel—say Bulwer's "Zanoni,"
Or a poem—"Lucile," "Lalla Rookh';
Bonbons from Maillard's, or a necklace
Of pearls, or a mammoth bouquet?
By Jove! I am perfectly reckless—
I wonder what Maud will say!

Shall I speak of the palace at Como
Which captured the heart of Pauline?
There's a likeness of Claude in a chromo;
Would you buy it and practice the scene?
But no! I'm no Booth, nor an Irving;
My fancy has led me astray.
To a lover so true and deserving
I wonder what Maud will say!

Could I warble like Signor Galassi,
In passionate song I would soar,—
I recall she applauded him as he
Serenaded the fair Leonore;
My strain should resound love-compelling,
Far sweeter than Orpheus' lay;
Already my bosom is swelling—
I wonder what Maud will say!

Shall I tell her my love very gravely,
Or propose in a moment of mirth,
Or lead to the subject suavely,

And ention how much I am worth?
Old fellow, I know I shall blunder;
When she blossoms as bright as the day,
My wits will be dazzled. Oh, thunder!
I wonder what Maud will say!

DOLLIE.

SHE sports a witching gown
With a ruffle up and down
On the skirt.
She is gentle, she is shy ;
But there's mischief in her eye,
She's a flirt !

She displays a tiny glove,
And a dainty little love
Of a shoe ;
And she wears her hat a-tilt
Over bangs that never wilt
In the dew.

'Tis rumored chocolate creams
Are the fabric of her dreams—
But enough !

I know beyond a doubt
That she carries them about
In her muff.

With her dimples and her curls
She exasperates the girls
Past belief:
They hint that she's a cat,
And delightful things like that
In their grief.

It is shocking, I declare!
But what does Dollie care
When the beaux
Come flocking to her feet
Like the bees around a sweet
Little rose?

A KNOT OF BLUE.

(*For the Boys of Yale.*)

SHE hath no gems of lustre bright
To sparkle in her hair ;
No need hath she of borrowed light
To make her beauty fair.
Upon her shining locks afloat
Are daisies wet with dew,
And peeping from her lissome throat
A little knot of blue.

A dainty knot of blue,
A ribbon blithe of hue,
It fills my dreams with sunny gleams,—
That little knot of blue.

I met her down the shadowed lane,
Beneath the apple tree,
The balmy blossoms fell like rain

Upon my Love and me ;
And what I said, or what I did
That morn, I never knew,
But to my breast there came and hid
A little knot of blue.

A little knot of blue,
A love-knot strong and true,
'Twill hold my heart till life shall part,—
That little knot of blue.

A FAIR ATTORNEY.

ALAS ! the world has gone awry
Since Cousin Lillian entered college,
For she has grown so learnéd I
Oft tremble at her wondrous knowledge.
Whene'er I dare to woo her now
She frowns that I should so annoy her,
And then proclaims, with lofty brow,
Her mission is to be a lawyer.

Life glides no more on golden wings,
A sunny waif from Eldorado ;
I've learned how true the poet sings,
That coming sorrow casts its shadow.
When tutti-frutti lost its spell,
I felt some hidden grief impended ;
When she declined a caramel,
I knew my rosy dream had ended.

She paints no more on china plaques,
With tints that would have crazed Murillo,
Strange birds that never plumed their backs
When Father Noah braved the billow.
Her fancy limns, with brighter brush,
The splendid triumphs that await her,
When, in the court, a breathless hush
Gives homage to the keen debater.

'Tis sad to meet such crushing *noes*
From eyes as blue as Scottish heather;
'Tis sad a maid with cheeks of rose
Should have her heart bound up in leather.
'Tis sad to keep one's passion pent,
Though Pallas' arms the Fair environ
But worse to have her quoting Kent
When one is fondly breathing Byron.

When Lillian's licensed at the law
Her fame, be sure, will live forever;
No barrister will pick a flaw

In logic so extremely clever.
The sheriff will forget his nap
To feast upon the lovely vision,
And e'en the Judge will set his cap
At her, and dream of love Elysian.

THE DIMPLE ON HER CHEEK.

WITHIN a nest of roses,
Half hidden from the sight,
Until a smile discloses
Its loveliness aright,
Behold the work of Cupid,
Who wrought it in a freak,
The witching little dimple—
The dimple on her cheek!

The Sirens' lays and glances
To lure the sailor nigh;
The perilous romances
Of fabled Lorelei,
And all the spells of Circe
Are reft of charm and weak,
Beside the dainty dimple—
The dimple on her cheek!

Were these the golden ages
  Of knights and troubadours,
Who brighten olden pages
  With tourneys and amours,
What lances would be broken—
  What silver lutes would speak,
In honor of the dimple—
    The dimple on her cheek!

THE SAILOR'S SWEETHEART.

MY love he is a sailor lad,
He says he loves me true,
For all my wealth of golden hair,
Because my eyes are blue ;
And while he is upon the sea,
Where raging billows roar,
The village lads come wooing me
At least a half a score.
I list to what the laddies say,
Of smiles they have no lack,
And though I say nor yea nor nay,
I think I'll wait for Jack.

There's Donald, and there's Robin Gray,
Oh, you should hear them sigh,
I smile at them and only say
I'll answer by and by.

They bring me trinkets from the fair,
And ribbons bright like this ;
And oftentimes they humbly kneel
And plead me for a kiss,
But then I turn and look away,
Across the billows black,
And softly to myself I say,
I think I'll wait for Jack.

Ye bonnie stars shine out, shine out,
Ye billows cease your war ;
O south wind rise and blow my love
Within the harbor bar !
No other lad can woo as he ;
My smiles are shallow smiles,
For oh, my heart is on the sea
Amid the western isles,
And though I let the laddies woo
I give no wooing back ;
I only do as lassies do,
Just while I wait for Jack.

AT THE MAKING OF THE HAY.

WHEN the whip-poor-wills are calling,
And the apple-blooms are falling,
With a tender tint forestalling
Summer's blush upon the grass;
Where the little stars are keeping
Watch above the meadow sleeping,
And the jack-o'-lantern's peeping
I will meet my bonnie lass.

I will seek her; I will find her;
I will slyly steal behind her;
And with kisses I will blind her
Till she names the happy day
And when the barley's heading,
And the summer rose is shedding,
Oh, there'll be a merry wedding
At the making of the hay!

UNDER THE ROSE.

HE. (*aside.*)

IF I should steal a little kiss,
Oh, would she weep, I wonder?
I tremble at the thought of bliss—
If I should steal a little kiss!
Such pouting lips would never miss
The dainty bit of plunder;
If I should steal a little kiss,
Oh, would she weep, I wonder?

SHE. (*aside.*)

He longs to steal a kiss of mine—
He may if he'll return it:
If I can read the tender sign,
He longs to steal a kiss of mine;
"In love and war"—you know the line,

Why cannot he discern it?
He longs to steal a kiss of mine—
He may if he'll return it.

BOTH. (*five minutes later.*)

A little kiss when no one sees—
Where is the impropriety?
How sweet amid the birds and bees
A little kiss when no one sees;
Nor is it wrong, the world agrees,
If taken with sobriety.
A little kiss when no one sees,
Where is the impropriety?

THE LASS WITH LAUGHING EYES.

I KNOW a lass with laughing eyes
Whose mouth is like a berry.
She cannot frown—she never tries—
Her heart is always merry.
On all the lads she smiles in glee,
Her teeth are of the whitest ;
But Oh ! the smile she gives to me,
It is the best and brightest.—
Across the mead,
O'er rock and reed,
My Love hath gone a-Maying ;
And one who knows
The path she goes
No longer can be staying.

The bluebird pipes his blithest lay,
The wild bees hum in metre.
My Love is in the wood to-day,
And I have come to greet her.
It cannot be that life allows
A purer joy than this is—
To meet a lassie 'neath the boughs
And tell your love with kisses.
Good bye, good bye,
My hope is high,
I can no longer tarry ;
For men must woo
When eyes are blue,
And bonnie maids must marry.

MY MANDOLIN.

A RELIC from Provençal days
Of gay amours and tourneys bright,
Across its strings my fancy strays—
I am a troubadour to-night.

Where fountains leap and roses climb,
And mountain zephyrs seaward wing,
I stand and troll an ardent rhyme
To one who blushes while I sing.

With gleeful grace my numbers swell,
My fingers glide from fret to fret ;
With quickening pace my love I tell
In virelay and chansonnette.

The vision fades in roseate mist ;
Another glads my dreamful eye :
With snowy plume in bannered list,
I wait the herald's clarion cry.

A charge ! a shock ! I see him reel—
My rival—'neath my gleaming lance ;
While trumpets sound I proudly wheel
To greet the fairest face in France.

I wend me where, enthroned above,
She sits amid the courtly throng ;
With beating heart I crown my love
The queen of beauty and of song !

Alas, alas ! 'tis but a dream,
The sun of chivalry has set ;
Tis vain to mourn its faded beam,
'Twill rise no more. And yet—and yet—

I know a maiden passing fair
A modern troubadour would win ;
So, Mabel, drop that mocking air,
And I will tune my mandolin.

A KISS IN THE RAIN.

ONE stormy morn I chanced to meet
A lassie in the town ;
Her locks were like the ripened wheat,
Her laughing eyes were brown.
I watched her as she tripped along
Till madness filled my brain,
And then—and then—I know 'twas wrong—
I kissed her in the rain !

With rain-drops shining on her cheek,
Like dew-drops on a rose,
The little lassie strove to speak
My boldness to oppose ;
She strove in vain, and quivering
Her finger stole in mine ;
And then the birds began to sing,
The sun began to shine.

Oh, let the clouds grow dark above,
My heart is light below ;
'Tis alway summer when we love,
However winds may blow ;
And I'm as proud as any prince,
All honors I disdain :
She says I am her *rain beau* since
I kissed her in the rain.

EULALIE.

HER voice is like the mocking-bird's upon the
myrtle tree,
Her eyes are like the summer stars that frolic on the
sea ;
Oh, 'tis rapture to look at her ; and it sets my heart
abeat,
Just to catch the pretty patter of her merry little feet.

The Fairies spun her tresses on a spindle made of
pearl,
Then dipped them in the summer shine and put them
up in curl ;
And when I see them flutter, as she dances in the wind,
I wish I were a butterfly, or —— something of the kind.

I know that Cupid did it, and I think it was a sin
To carve a cunning dimple in the middle of her chin ;

For it is a crime to covet—so says the Law Divine—
Yet I look at it, and love it, and I want it all for mine.

She whispers that she loves me! Now be it understood,
The tidings are delightful—I'd believe them if I could;
But in *her* vocabulary with its tantalizing flow
The truth will often tarry far behind a "yes," or "no."

She smiles at me! She frowns at me! She knows I cannot fly;
O Cupid come and aid me with an arrow on the sly,
That when the orange bowers are blowing, Eulalie
May wear the snowy flowers in a bridal wreath for me!

THE SKATER BELLE.

ALONG the ice I see her fly
With moonlit tresses blown awry,
And floating from her twinkling feet
Are wafted sounds as silvery sweet
As April winds when May is nigh.

Is it a Naiad coy and shy?
Or can it be the Lorelei
Who lures me with her rare deceit?
It is the hour for magic meet;
Resist the spell, 'twere vain to try.

Her beauty thrills the earth and sky
From glowing cheek and flashing eye;
And as she wanders fair and fleet
The spangled branches bend to greet
And wave a kiss as she goes by.

LILLIAN'S FAN.

LITTLE fan, of fluff and pearl,
Tell me, pray, is life a whirl
Of delight?
In Folly's fickle crew
There is naught as blithe as you,
Or as bright.

You know no other skies
Save my lady's azure eyes
All a-gleam;
And beneath them, night and day.
Lo, the moments glide away
Like a dream.

Each silver strain a-float
From my lady's slender throat
You have heard;

And oftentimes you nest
In the roses at her breast
Like a bird.

Oh, the blushes you have hid,
And the notes behind you slid,
Naughty fan !
The witcheries you weave
Have the cunning to deceive
Any man.

Humanity rebels
If I mention half the spells
You employ ;
You laugh at breaking hearts,
And a lover's aching smarts
You enjoy.

Yet, in spite of everything,
Still I bless your snowy wing,
When you dare

To screen her head and mine
So "mamma" may not divine
Who is there.

I envy you her touch—
Oh, I cannot tell how much;
It is sad!
Just to see her gayly tip
You against her cherry lip
Drives me mad!

Alas, I would I knew
Half the secrets known to you,
Dainty fan!
As it is, my fate I guess,
In Damoclean distress,
As I can.

Beauty's pet, a word aside—
While you flutter in your pride
Have a care;

Or ere the season's through
She may weary too of you,
So beware!

MY SWEETHEART.

SHE never graces crowded balls
Where fevered waltzes thrill,
She never dreams of marble halls
And vassals at her will ;
She dances where the waterfalls
Are leaping wild and free,
Then sinks to sleep in cottage walls,
And only dreams of me.

She never glances down the street
From fæton or coupé,
She does not know the mode to greet
A lover at the play ;
But from the loaded hay my sweet
Oft sees the swallows soar,
And well she knows and flies to meet
My footstep at the door.

So let the statesman pass me by
And win the noisy game,
And let the soldier's banner fly
Along the road to fame ;
Wealth too may go ; for what care I
Beneath this dome of blue,
If I can gaze in Maggie's eye
And know she loves me true !

MABEL.

FAIR Mabel bids me sing to-night!
Should Mabel plead in vain?
Dear Muse, when lovely lips invite,
Ah! sweet should be the strain;
So lend my lyre a blither lay,
Whose winsome glee shall flow
As lightly as the winds at play,
Where summer roses blow.

Fair Mabel bids me sing to-night!
In days of old romance,
The minstrel sang for Beauty bright,
The gallant broke a lance;
And both in homage proudly knelt
To loveliness and grace—
Ah, luckless age! it never felt
The charm of Mabel's face!

Fair Mabel bids me sing to-night !
  Her voice is low and pure ;
Oh, who can hear that voice aright,
  And yield not to its lure ?
Or who can meet those peerless eyes
  That dim the vestal's flame,
And never feel a yearning rise
  To win a poet's name ?

Fair Mabel bids me sing to-night !
  Ah, could my numbers chime
With Herrick's grace, or vie in flight
  With Waller's courtly rhyme ;
Oh, I would voice a strain to match
  Her every lissome wile ;
And centuries to come should catch
  The splendors of her smile.

Fair Mabel bids me sing to-night ;—
  Alas ! she pleads in vain !
The Muse hath winged a silent flight

Beyond the silver main.
A song for Mabel were too sweet
For mortal ears to know ;
I only catch its rhythmic beat
When Dreamland zephyrs blow.

TO LILLIAN'S FIRST GRAY HAIR.

WEIRD visitor, what dost thou there,
Amid gay Lillian's golden tresses?
A traitor to the reigning fair,
Thy pallid hue thy guilt confesses.

Still at her shrine love-poets sing,
Enamored artists ply their brushes;
Still Cupid comes with wanton wing
To forge his arrows in her blushes.

Avaunt, I say, unwelcome wight,
Unless thou comest to adore her;
For even Time forgets his flight
And stands with ravished eyes before her.

CUPID AT COURT.

YOUNG Cupid strung his bow one day,
And sallied out for sport ;
As country hearts were easy prey
Odds Darts ! he went to court.

Of all that wore the puff and patch,
Belinda led the fair :
With falbala, and fan to match,
I trow she made him stare !

"Oho !" he cried, and quickly drew
His bow upon the sly ;—
But though he pierced her bosom through,
She never breathed a sigh !

This was a turn, beyond a doubt,
That filled him with amaze,

And so he sought his mother out,
With tear-bewildered gaze.

"You silly boy," Dame Venus said,
"Why did you waste your art?
Go clip your curls and hide your head—
Belinda *has* no heart!"

BESSIE BROWN, M. D.

'TWAS April when she came to town ;
The birds had come, the bees were swarming
Her name, she said, was Doctor Brown :
I saw at once that she was charming.
She took a cottage tinted green,
Where dewy roses loved to mingle ;
And on the door, next day, was seen
A dainty little shingle.

Her hair was like an amber wreath ;
Her hat was darker, to enhance it.
The violet eyes that glowed beneath
Were brighter than her keenest lancet.
The beauties of her glove and gown
The sweetest rhyme would fail to utter.
Ere she had been a day in town
The town was in a flutter.

The gallants viewed her feet and hands,
And swore they never saw such wee things ;
The gossips met in purring bands
And tore her piecemeal o'er the tea-things.
The former drank the Doctor's health
With clinking cups, the gay carousers ;
The latter watched her door by stealth,
Just like so many mousers.

But Doctor Bessie went her way
Unmindful of the spiteful cronies,
And drove her buggy every day
Behind a dashing pair of ponies.
Her flower-like face so bright she bore,
I hoped that time might never wilt her.
The way she tripped across the floor
Was better than a philter.

Her patients thronged the village street ;
Her snowy slate was always quite full.
Some said her bitters tasted sweet ;
And some pronounced her pills delightful.

'Twas strange—I knew not what it meant—
She seemed a nymph from Eldorado ;
Where'er she came, where'er she went,
Grief lost its gloomy shadow.

Like all the rest, I too grew ill ;
My aching heart there was no quelling.
I tremble at my doctor's bill,—
And lo ! the items still are swelling.
The drugs I've drunk you'd weep to hear !
They've quite enriched the fair concocter,
And I'm a ruined man, I fear,
Unless—I wed the Doctor !

ADIEU, YE FLOWERS.

ADIEU, ye flowers red and white,
That when the skies were blue and bright
We twined in wreaths and posies!
Yes, fate proclaims the hour is nigh
When we, Sweetheart, must bid good-bye
To summertime and roses.

Can you forget the ceaseless flow
Of lightsome jest and laughter low
That crowned the night with blisses?
Within our joys a thief was hid;
Time envied us, he knows he did,
Our merry hearts and kisses!

How oft with song we woke the moon,
How oft the zephyrs caught the tune
And onward wandered humming;

Not one dear night with gleam and glow
Would I exchange with Romeo,
Though Juliet were coming.

Adieu, ye skies! No brighter stars
E'er lit the lofty helm of Mars,
Or wreathed the brow of Venus.
Sweetheart, though brief the joy we quaffed,
How gayly Cupid would have laughed
If he had only seen us!

Alas, the rose-tree now is bare!
Its wondrous perfume, spent in air,
Each day of autumn misses.
But do not grieve, rich are we still
As long as lips can coin at will
A rosy chain of kisses.

AN AFTERTHOUGHT.

'TWAS in the garden chatting,
Amid the mignonette,—
She with her snowy tatting,
I with my cigarette.
I still can see her fingers
Flit softly in and out;
With rapture memory lingers
To view her lips a-pout.

A happy sunbeam glancing
Upon a wayward curl
Set every pulse to dancing,
And turned my brain a-whirl;
And when she looked up shyly,
I could not help, you see,
But stoop and kiss her slyly,
Behind the apple-tree.

Strange that some mote forever
  Should mar the rays of bliss !
Though conscious I had never
  Yet won so sweet a kiss,
Alas ! the act of plunder
  So gracefully she bore,
I could not choose but wonder,
  Had she been kissed before ?

THE BRIDE.

CRŒSUS will give her a necklace
Enwoven of Orient pearls,
Or a cluster of jewels all fleckless
To laugh from her shimmering curls.

Laon will twine the sweet myrtle
With posies that maidens love best—
Shy lilies to peep from her kirtle,
Wild roses to blush on her breast.

Flowers or gems give I neither:
Apart from the jubilant throng,
At the feet of the Muses I breathe her
A blessing enshrined in a song.

ZEPHYRUS AND THE LILY.

CONTENDING in the midnight air
With silver voices full of balm,
Of late the flowers strove to bear
Away from each the envied palm ;
And each implored the zephyr's powers
To make her queen of all the flowers.

Bursting the bodice that she chose
To hold her charms but not to hide,
Spoke first a haughty crimson Rose,
Voluptuous and swelled with pride :
" I have been called a queen by mortals
E'er since the stars lit Heaven's portals ;

" What envious flower shall take from me
Supremacy in floral throngs ?
O Zephyrus, canst thou not see

To whom the crown by right belongs?"
And while the storm of passion swept her,
She seemed to wave an unseen sceptre.

A silence on the garden fell,
A hush of anger and surprise;
But soon I heard a murmur swell,
And caught the flash of angry eyes.
And then with vanity demented
The Poppy next her cause presented:

"O Zephyrus, prithee give heed,
Nor slight my tender loveliness.
My race is very high indeed;
Though somewhat careless in our dress,"—
This plea she thought she could not fail in,—
"Of old our charms were known to Galen."

Too late she paused! The peals of mirth
Rang merrily across the lawn,
Like silver sounds that have their birth

In rivulets at early dawn ;
And lo ! the Poppy's face grew redder
With shame to think how folly led her.

The Tulip next her claims advanced ;
And as she flashed upon the night,
Each gazer's eye beheld entranced,
Her rivals trembled at the sight.
And as they watched the pretty speaker
They felt their hopes fast growing weaker.

"O Zephyrus," they heard her say,
"My gold and purple hues are seen ;
While cradled in the moss I lay
I knew that Nature meant a queen.
On me bestow thy gracious powers,
And make me queen of all the flowers."

With each on royalty intent
Amid that fair contending throng,
Such witching charms had beauty lent,

Aurora's son was puzzled long ;
Nor did he reach a true decision
Until he saw a lovely vision :

A Lily at the fountain's brim,
Racked by alternate hope and fear,
Raised her beseeching eyes to him
Eloquent with a trembling tear.
She did not speak ; no words were needed,
Her peerless beauty only pleaded ;

And Zephyrus beholding cried,
" Ye Flowers, kneel before your queen ;
In all my weary wanderings wide
She is the fairest I have seen ;
From every jealous thought dissever ;
I crown the Lily queen forever."

MY LITTLE GIRL.

MY little girl is nested
Within her tiny bed,
With amber ringlets crested
Around her dainty head;
She lies so calm and stilly,
She breathes so soft and low,
She calls to mind a lily
Half hidden in the snow.

A weary little mortal
Has gone to slumberland;
The Pixies at the portal
Have caught her by the hand.
She dreams her broken dolly
Will soon be mended there,
That looks so melancholy
Upon the rocking-chair.

I kiss your wayward tresses,
  My drowsy little queen,
I know you have caresses
  From floating forms unseen.
O, Angels let me keep her
  To kiss away my cares,
This darling little sleeper,
  Who has my love and prayers !

ON THE STAIR.

WHEN rosy morn has driven
The starlight from the deep,
And sleepy charms are riven,
And slumber fairies weep ;
With eyelids half uplifted,
And senses half aware,
I listen to the little feet
That twinkle on the stair.

At first I hear a tapping
No louder than the rain ;
But soon adieu to napping
And slumber's drowsy train !
And then I lie in wonder
While thunder thrills the air,
From just a brace of little feet
That twinkle on the stair.

Anon the storm is waning,
It ebbs without the door,
And in the calm remaining
I catch the fading roar;
And then I fall a-dreaming
The dangers I would dare
To keep from harm the little feet
That twinkle on the stair.

GOOD-NIGHT, SWEETHEART.

GOOD-NIGHT, sweetheart—the moon has set
With parting glances full of woe ;
And see—the lily's cheeks are wet ;
Good-night, sweetheart, good-night !

When Pleasure dons her coronet
The moments fly like sparks a-glow ;
Alas, it seems but now we met—
Good-night, sweetheart, good-night !

Ah, do not weep, I will not let
My darling's eyes be sullied—no !
A kiss shall soothe thy fond regret ;
Sweetheart, good-night—good-night !

SHE IS NOT BORN OF HIGH DEGREE.

SHE is not born of high degree,
The maiden of my song;
Upon her brow no gem I see
It's fevered light prolong;
And she will never, never be
The idol of a throng.

Far in a mossy woodland way
Wild roses kiss her hair,
Around her feet the shadows play,
Her glee the swallows share;
And he will bless the peerless day
Who wins her promise there.

I would I were that happy knight!
No storm could stay my quest;

Until I won my lady bright
My lance should never rest,
For knight was ne'er in feast or fight
By fairer guerdon blest.

MY WEE LOVE WENT A-MAYING.

MY wee Love went a-Maying
Where the mellow lights were playing ;
And the swaying shadows round her
Sought to peep beneath her hood.
I know the birds sang sweeter,
While the brown bees hummed in metre,
And the floating petals crowned her
As she wandered through the wood.

O the dew-drops and the flowers
'Mid the fragrance-breathing bowers,
How they wondered at the glory
That enshrined her as she stood !
Yet they laughed when I waylaid her,
For her drooping lids betrayed her
As she listened to the story
That I told her in the wood.

Now the dreary winds are calling,
And the flakes are swiftly falling,
But sweet fancies intermingle
By the hearthstone warm and good ;
For my little wife is sitting,
With her busy fingers flitting,
Far more dear beside the ingle
Than I deemed her in the wood.

GO HOLD WHITE ROSES TO THY CHEEK.

GO hold white roses to thy cheek,
And twine them in thy hair;
Go gaze into their hearts, and seek
The message hidden there;
And when they softly, sweetly tell
Their secret, pray thee listen well,
And dream 'tis I who speak.

Go wander where, low murmuring,
The brooklet glides a-near,
And trembling willows droop and cling
With bended heads to hear;
And when the streamlet, rippling by,
Repeats its wooing melody,
Oh, dream 'tis I who sing!

Sweetheart, as fadeless perfumes throng
From roses long since crushed

And as the brooklet's tender song
Is never, never hushed,
So will my heart keep, day and night,
Its peerless love forever bright,
Through sorrow and through wrong.

MABEL'S WINDOW.

AROUND her window roses blow
With graces wild and rare,
And as they ripple to and fro
No others shine so fair ;
For sleeping in the silver glow,
Or smiling in the rain,
The happy roses seem to know
It is her window-pane.

Whene'er I greet the winds that fare
Across the Mexique sea,
I know it is for her they bear
Such freight of spicery ;
For when they near the lattice there
They sing a softer strain,
And whisper through the fragrant air—
It is her window-pane.

I often wander there at night
  Beneath the summer skies,
To see the little stars grow bright
  And gaze with loving eyes
And as their glances soft and white
  A purer lustre gain,
I reel and murmur with delight—
  It is her window-pane.

AT SEA.

OH, brightly shines in realms afar
With golden light a lustrous star;
No lessening ray its splendor knows
That through the night serenely glows.

But oh! for thee a purer light
Burns in my heart both day and night,
For gleams no star in realm above
Can pale the constant star of love.

Oh lightly flies at dawn of day
The sea-gull through the silver spray,
And scorns with snowy wing the deep
Whose threatening voices never sleep.

But swifter than the fair sea-bird
Speeds o'er the tide by tempest stirred,
My thoughts fly o'er life's stormy sea,
And rest at home with love and thee.

O, SWEETHEART, WHERE ARE YOU?

THE summer came, the summer sped
With garlands bright and fair,
A thousand perfumes lightly shed
Were lavished on the air;
But now the summer rose is dead,
The birds are o'er the blue,
Where is the peerless love you plead,—
O, Sweetheart, where are you?

The autumn winds were shod with gold
Beneath the sobbing trees,
The autumn tide in splendor rolled
A-down the Western seas:
I wandered through the mossy wold
As we were wont to do;
You came not as in days of old—
O, Sweetheart, where are you?

'Tis winter now : the billows grieve
  Around the dreary shore.
If love is dead, Oh, make believe
  You love me as of yore !
But no ! my fancy shall not weave
  False dreams of one so true,—
You are too loyal to deceive ;
  O, Sweetheart, where are you?

HER CASEMENT.

LO, beneath my lady's casement
I am watching here alone :
Through the roses' interlacement
Be my lissome carol blown.

On, ye Zephyrs, airy lispers,
Timid heralds of the light,
Breathe my love in wooing whispers
Where my lady sleeps to-night.

Onward, upward, stealing quaintly,
Stir the ringlets round her ears ;
Kiss each fairy tress, and faintly
Murmur all my hopes and fears

Dian pale, with spells enchanting,
Softly sways the land and sea ;
Would a-down her sceptre slanting
There might glide a dream of me.

A SONG TO THE ROSES.

O HAPPY Roses, bloom your best.
For I have come to cull you
To blush upon my Mabel's breast;
So let no shadows dull you.
With gems divine
From morning's eyne
O'er Mabel's bosom hover,
And whisper oft
With perfume soft,
I love her, Oh, I love her!

Go, happy Blossoms, act your part,
And seek that balmy haven:
Go tell sweet Mabel on my heart
Her darling name is graven.
And, Roses, list,
When ye have kist

My Sweet, then sigh above her,
That though ye die
And shattered lie,
I love her, still I love her!

SERENADE.

THE Southern sky is pearly bright
With limpid moonlight faintly glowing;
The mockbird sues the willing night
Where pinky myrtle trees are blowing;
No day-born care the soul encumbers,
No sullen sounds the calm undo,
While bird and wind, in blending numbers,
Proclaim the hour to woo.

O lady fair, throw wide thy casement,
Nor let thy minstrel be denied!
The jasmine, with soft interlacement,
Seeks not from the moon to hide.
Upon thy lattice starlight lingers
Longing for thy golden hair,
And wilt thou shun its silver fingers
Shyly waiting there?

Ah ! joy is mine ! through jasmine sprays
My lady's eyes, like stars, are peeping ;
See, mockbird, see, their lovely rays
Have set the dewdrops all to leaping.
How softly bend the skies above her,
How gently coos the summer wind,
And all the stars, they lean to love her.
My lady fair, and kind !

CITRON BLOSSOMS.

THE orange trees were drifting down
Their snow upon the land,
And each wave cast a silver crown
Of surf upon the strand,
When smiling down, with half a frown,
My lady rode into the town ;
And left alone I kissed the tracks upon the shining sand.

At midnight by the glimmering lake
How soft the night-wind blew !
We saw the almond blossoms shake
And shimmer with the dew ;
We heard the distant billows break ;
We made the vows that lovers make,
Until the night with silver wings beyond the ocean flew.

The new year came : the air was gay
And wild with rare perfume,
For little maidens strewed the way
With sprays of citron bloom.
I cursed the blossoms as they lay,
With bitter words that fateful day,
For 'twas my lady's wedding morn, and I was not the groom !

YE TIMID WINDS.

YE timid winds, with rustling shoon,
Why falter in your flight?
Lay by your fears and grant the boon
I fondly plead to-night.
Speed on, speed on where roses wreathe
My lady's lattice high,
And with your mellow cooing breathe
The love I fain would sigh.

O gentle Sprites, where shall I find
A herald like to ye,
To softly steal and stir her blind
And bid her dream of me?
Behold, the moon hath come to lend
Her light by sea and shore;
Speed on, speed on; howe'er ye wend
My love will fly before!

IF I COULD WEAVE INTO MY VERSE.

IF I could weave into my verse
The melodies the bees rehearse,
Or by a secret art ensnare
The notes that thrill the morning air,
Perchance thine eyes that shame the sloe
Would melt before my lay,
Nor let my loving homage flow
Unnoted day by day.

If I could catch the rose's breath
That with the zephyr wantoneth,
Or twine about my song the grace
That dreams upon the lily's face,
And sing thy peerless beauty's charm
As sang the bards of old,
Perchance a tender smile would warm
Thy lips so rich and cold.

Alas ! too well thy minstrel knows
What time his purest measure flows,
Though strength and skill his fingers bless
No strain can voice thy loveliness ;
Yet do not scorn the minstrel's art
  Though poor his lay may be :
Remember that his song and heart
  Are offered both to thee.

THE SONG OF MARIANA.

I LINGER at the gateway where once we stood together,
The withered lilies glimmer and beckon eerily.
O Truant Heart ! come straightway ; through fair and stormy weather
My love has ne'er grown dimmer,—Dear Heart, come back to me !

The amber west is fading. The gloom begins to thicken
Above the streamlet lowly a-sobbing to the sea ;
With tender light upbraiding, seest thou the starlets quicken ?
Thou heedest them too slowly,—Dear Heart, come back to me !

Ah, were I like the swallow, with joyful pinions lifted,
The cruel distance cleaving, I'd swiftly fly to thee ;
But oh ! I may not follow : amid the darkness drifted
I cry out in my grieving,—Dear Heart, come back to me !

THE ORANGE TREE.

SHE stood beneath the orange tree
With its breathing blooms of white,
And waved a parting kiss to me
Through the waning amber light;
And the evening wind rose mournfully
To meet the coming night.

The stars came out, and I sailed away,
Away through the Mexique sea—
Away, away, for I could not stay;
And oft on bended knee,
I prayed for her I left that day
Beneath the orange tree.

'Tis eventide, and again to me
The summer breezes sigh;

The orange flowers are fair to see—
So tenderly they lie ;
But oh ! there's a grave 'neath the orange tree,
And I would that I could die !

SOMEWHERE.

IS she biding, where eternal summer smiles upon
the seas,
And the snowy orange blossoms ever flake the shelly
strand?
Is she biding, is she biding where the tender tropic
breeze
Tells the story of his wooings to the billows on the
sand?
Somewhere, somewhere, I know not where,
Upon the land or sea—
Somewhere, somewhere, all pure and fair
My love abides for me.

Is she biding 'mid the clover blooms upon the purple
hills,
Where the mellow bees are humming and the apple
blossoms float?

Is she biding, is she biding where the brooklet leaps
and trills,
And does sne bind the daisies in a posy for her
throat?
Somewhere, somewhere, I know not where,
My Love and I shall meet.
For there's a Fate through foul and fair
That guides my wayward feet.

Is she biding where the starlight gleams upon the
frozen gloom,
And faintly ring the carols that awake the drowsy
morn?
Is she biding, is she biding where the roses never
bloom,
And the poppies never wave their crimson banners
through the corn?
She bides somewhere, I know not where,
But surely this I know:
'Twill alway seem like summer there,
Howe'er the wind may blow!

THE MEADOW PATH.

WHEN lass and laddie, you and I,
With little lives unknown to care,
I chased for you the butterfly,
And twined the daisies in your hair.
Once more we tread the very spot ;
The daisies still are blowing—see !
I thought you loved me then ; if not,
Give now your heart to me !

Fate turned from yours my path aside,
That once across the flowers had lain,
And in the foam of Folly's tide
I sought to soothe my grief in vain ;
Some face, I said, will seem as fair,
Some other eye as soft to see.
I gazed, but saw no beauty there ;
So give your heart to me !

Alas ! and have I come too late
To win what I have lost so long :
And must I stand without the gate
By sin and sorrow tossed so long ?
Ah ! no ; the night must end in light,
Within your eyes the dawn I see ;
So, while the shadows wing their flight,
Give now your heart to me !

THE CAPTAIN'S FEATHER.

THE dew is on the heather,
The moon is in the sky,
And the captain's waving feather
Proclaims the hour is nigh,
When some upon their horses
Shall through the battle ride,
And some with bleeding corses
Must on the heather bide.

The dust is on the heather
The moon is in the sky,
And about the captain's feather
The bolts of battle fly;
But hark, what sudden wonder
Breaks forth upon the gloom?
It is the cannon's thunder—
It is the voice of doom!

The blood is on the heather,
  The night is in the sky,
And the gallant captain's feather
  Shall wave no more on high;
The grave and holy brother
  To God is saying Mass,
But who shall tell his mother,
  And who shall tell his lass?

BOAT SONG.

[Respectfully dedicated to Mrs. Mary Coffee O'Neal, of Florence, Ala.]

THERE'S music on the river ! 'Tis the purling of the tide,
And merrily it tinkles from the bubbles as we glide,
Now it fades away to silence ; now it wakes so sweet a note,
Fancy whispers 'tis an echo from a laughing Naiad's throat ;
Or else it is fair Undine who is singing 'neath the wave ;
Or yet perchance the Lorelei within her crystal cave.

There's music on the river ! More joyously 'tis heard
Gaily trilling from the bosom of a bonnie mocking-bird
Amid the swaying willow trees, melodiously clear,

He carols to his brooding mate the lay she loves to hear.
How tenderly she listens with her little heart a-beat!
Though he sings it o'er a thousand times she thinks it just as sweet.

There's music on the river! 'Tis the fluting of the wind
Blithely boasting of the flowers he has wooed and left behind.
Do you scent the fragrant kisses that he brings upon his mouth?
They were stolen from the lilies of the lakelet in the south;
And alas, the lissome roses, dewy darlings of the night,
He has left them broken-hearted in the sultry noon to blight.

There's music on the river! It will never know eclipse,
For 'tis the peerless melody that floats from Beauty's lips;

Ah ! gently it is wafted from its home of rosy bloom.
And it steals upon the senses like a fairy-brought perfume ;
O sweetly carol wind and bird and tinkling water fall,
But the gentle voice of woman is the sweetest sound of all !

ALABAMA.

WHY shines the moon so wan and white?
Why drift the shades so thick to-night
Beneath the winds that wail in flight
Across the sobbing foam?
I watched the happy swallows flee
Beyond the lurid autumn sea;
They fled and left the gloom to me,
Far—far from home.

Know'st thou that balmy Southern land,
By myrtle crowned, by zephyrs fanned,
Where verdant hills and forests grand
Smile 'neath an azure dome?
'Tis there the stars shed softer beams
As if to bless the woods and streams;
'Tis there I wander in my dreams,
Far—far from home.

I long to hear the murmuring pine,
To see the golden jasmine twine,
For there my fancy builds her shrine
Where e'er my footsteps roam.
O, sunny land, for thy sweet sake
A thousand tender memories wake ;
For thee my heart is like to break,
Far—far from home.

THE PINES.

THROUGH circling seasons night and day,
Forlornly gaunt and wistful
They voice the same pathetic lay
With echoes weird and tristful.
Have they incurred some secret stain,
Some sin beyond redeeming?
Alas! their sorrow spells my brain
And mingles with my dreaming.

They never feel the fragrant charms
From violets upbreathing;
They never heed the blushing arms
Of roses round them wreathing.
Their mystic woe knows no relief:
They stand through endless ages
Symbolic of a hopeless grief
Nor love nor time assuages.

I LOVE THE SHADOWS BEST.

A THOUSAND voices hath the morn
That wake the dreaming light ;
A thousand shadows hath the eve,
The children of the night.
But though the melodies of morn
Of rapture and of bliss are born,
I love the shadows best ;
For softly floating, meek and brown,
They kiss my weary eyelids down
And soothe my heart to rest.

NOONTIDE.

LO ! here amid the summer flowers,
Half-dozing through the noonday hours
In shadows cool and dim,
I rest at ease from care and cark,
With pinks and violets to mark
My small horizon's rim.

A truant cricket gone astray
Indulges in a roundelay—
A lissome footed guest ;
And then ere long I entertain
Gay butterflies, a dazzling train
In gold and purple drest.

At will upon the fountain spray
I watch the frolic colors play
In soft, translucent bars ;

Or gazing in the leafy skies
I dream I see a dryad's eyes
  Laugh mid the jasmine stars.

While from the gardens wealth of blooms
A myriad spicy-winged perfumes
  In sweet procession pass;
And far and faint the wild bees hum,
Echoing like an elfin drum,
  Beats time amid the grass.

THE EXILES.

(*A Cuban patriot on the streets of Montreal forcibly liberated a caged bird which he recognized as a native of his beloved isle.*)

SWEET Bird, I see thy gilded cage,
Thy fevered eyes and wild unrest,
And, oh! my heart would fain assuage
The woes that wring thy gentle breast.

Too vast for tears, thy perfect pain
Expression seeks in peerless song,
Whose haunting notes and low refrain
Are fraught with memories of wrong.

An alien 'neath a lowering sky,
I too am not unknown to Care;
I watch the dreary clouds go by—
The dusky pennants of Despair.

Knowest thou the land where merrily
The sunbeams chase and shadows flee,
Where happy stars laugh in the sky,
And laughing stars dance on the sea?

Knowest thou the land where Myrtle droops
And blushes in the ardent breeze,
Where Yellow Jasmine lightly loops
Its golden arms round wooing trees?

Ah! knowest thou where Magnolias blow,
With white brows leaning to the light,
Or idly swaying to and fro,
Caressed by the enamored Night?

Where Summer's banner never furls,
And Fancy rings a fairy chime,
While all the hours glide like pearls
A-down the rosary of Time?

Sweet Bird, I note thy bosom swell,
Thy wildly throbbing heart expand;

I see, I see thou knowest it well—
For 'tis, oh ! 'tis our native land!

I have no wing to skim the blue,
No plume to scorn the wind and sea,
But thou shalt cleave the tempest through,
And in my thought I'll fly with thee.

Away ! thy bars are burst in twain,
I spurn thy prison in the sod—
Who breaks the bond on Freedom lain
Fulfils the sweetest law of God !

THE BLOSSOMS OF THE SEA.

WHERE ocean crags are lifting
Their rugged heads on high,
Where silver sands are shifting
Beneath the summer sky,
Upon the emerald billows, like daisies on the lea,
Behold the laughing bubbles—the blossoms of the sea.

O richer than the roses
By lissome fingers tied,
O purer than the posies
That crown the happy bride,
No mortal hand may cull them; they were not born to be
The toys of idle beauty—the blossoms of the sea.

No Arctic cold can chill them
However keen it blow,
No tropic heat can kill them

However fierce it glow ;
Their lustre never withers : with garlands glad and free,
They gird the world with beauty—the blossoms of the sea.

When hostile flags are flinging
Their scorn from sail to sail,
And shot and shell are winging
With death upon the gale,
When gallant eyes grow brighter, and cowards fain would flee
They flash in fearless millions—the blossoms of the sea.

And when the battle's ended
That stormed along the waves,
And solemn skies are splendid
Above the ocean graves,
How eerie is their shining that laughed but now in glee.
How sorrowful their sobbing—the blossoms of the sea.

THE PICTURES IN THE SKY.

THE heavens had ceased their thunder
And the West was all ablaze ;—
Upon the radiant wonder
Three faces turned to gaze.

Now one was childish and eager,
And one was manly and bold,
But the last was worn and meager
As it viewed the purple and gold.

And amid the changeful glory
Each saw more splendidly fair,
Than aught in song or story
A beautiful vision there.

Said the child : " Beside a river
That glimmers along the sky
I see with wings a-quiver,
A golden butterfly ! "

" Mine eyes behold a maiden,"
Cried out the joyful youth,
" Her tresses with gold are laden,
Her eyes are brimming with truth ! "

Then said the old man slowly :
" Far over the Western wave,
By the dying day made holy,
I see a peaceful grave ! "

And thus ere night had driven
Her dusky steeds a-near,
Kind God to each had given
The sight he held most dear.

THE SINGER'S REWARD.

A Legend.

ONCE there dwelt a singer in a valley far away,
Who in the fields with loving art awoke his lute and lay.

Now though his song, nor loud nor long, was strangely sweet to hear,
One day he said, while on his cheek there gleamed a silent tear :

" My note is low, my strain is weak, my singing all in vain ;
The little guerdon I desire I cannot hope to gain.

" I do not care for lofty fame, for wealth I do not long—
I only wish my fellow-men to love me for my song ! "

The kindly zephyrs caught his lays and bore them far
and wide,
"Such songs were never sung before!" the people rose
and cried.

The great king even listened in his palace by the sea,
And said, "Some day we'll send for him and honored
he shall be."

Alas, no herald ever came, the ancient legend saith;
But when he put his lute away and laid him down in
death,

The people made a great a-do, and reared a column
high,
In honor of the singer they had left in want to die.

THE FLIGHT OF SUMMER.

SO gently did sweet Summer pass me by,
  So lovely was the smile she cast,
Lulled by her beauty I
  Scarce knew she passed.

I only caught a gleaming in the west
  That must have been her trailing gown,
When Night, unwelcome guest,
  Came swooping down.

O little Star, thy pale and quivering face
  Proclaims that thou didst never see
Another with her grace
  And melody !

Beneath some other sky her loveliness
Shall float upon the waving wheat,
And other ears shall bless
Her carols sweet !

So haste, ye Winds that blow where'er ye list,
Unseen through all the changeful years,
And tell her that ye kissed
These falling tears.

Fair Star, the hour is late ; our dreary lot
Come let us strive to drown in sleep,
I, in my lonely cot,
Thou in the deep.

THE LITTLE BLUE-EYED THIEF.

ONE eve while splendor filled the West,
And told the day's approaching doom,
Alone I sat, by care oppressed,
Within my sad and silent room ;
A sunbeam danced upon the floor,
And as it fled, the gladsome ray,
A little thief crept in the door
And stole my heart away !

She to the raylet seemed akin,
So bright she was, so sweet and fair ;
I wondered much that she came in,
I wondered more she lingered there.
When, lo ! as lightly as a leaf,
She kissed my forehead, gaunt and gray ;
The darling little blue-eyed thief
Who stole my heart away !

She went as softly as she came,
A tinkling laugh was all I heard ;
I knew it was the little dame,
So much it sounded like a bird.
Then with my vanished gloom and grief,
Another thing I lost that day,
And soon I knew the little thief
Had borne my heart away.

Oft since, she glides within my room,
And ever makes my sorrows flee,
But though she takes away the gloom,
She never brings my heart to me.
And when I say " Exchange is fair,"
She only smiles and whispers " Nay,"
The little thief with golden hair
Who stole my heart away.

So swiftly all my days go by,
I'm hardly ever lonely now,
For if my darling hears me sigh
She smoothes the wrinkles from my brow.

My love for her is past belief,
And always when she comes I say :
" God bless the little blue-eyed thief
Who stole my heart away ! "

MY COMRADE.

IS there within the palace of thy heart
A chamber yet unentered and alone,
Whose distant walls all unadorned by art
Have never yet the faintest echo known ;

Whose threshold ne'er has felt the pulsing feet
Of friend or foe, whose door-way still is barred,
Whose smooth and pearly vault, all pure and sweet,
Has never been by worldly visions marred ?

I do entreat thee now, if such there be—
Perchance as yet e'en to thyself unknown—
However small, oh harken to my plea,
And let me call that lonely place my own !

Undo and let me in that silent door ;
A hermit I will be, and ne'er intrude

Upon thy joys, but will for evermore
A vigil keep o'er thee in quietude.

Oh I will ask of thee no fond caress,
Nor ever make demand upon thy care ;
And I will be so still thou wilt but guess,
While fortune smiles on thee, that I am there.

But should it chance upon some distant year
Thy joys like roses perish one by one,
And all the blessings that thou holdest dear
Wither like sunset hues when day is done ;

That fondly cherished friends frown with disdain
Or turn away in ill-concealed delight,
My love unsought and long in silence lain
Shall burn for thee a beacon in the night.

A DREAM.

I DREAMED I was a cagèd bird far brought
From a sunset land,
Who once had trilled his melodies untaught
On a tropic strand.

I sang my artless lays both morn and eve
For my lady's ear,
To soothe her gentle heart, and win reprieve
From grief and fear.

I soon forgot my home by the sundown shore,
So kind was she ;
Nor cared I aught if I should dwell no more
By the sunset sea.

For the lovely hues that dyed the Western skies
Were not more fair
Than the light that gleamed within my lady's eyes
Or lit her hair.

One dewy morn, when I had warbled o'er
My sweetest lay,
She wept ; and opening wide my prison door,
Bade me away !

Then thinking that she wished me from her side,
No more to see
Her face, I drooped my quivering wings and died
Of liberty !

MOCK ORANGE.

WHERE the Northern and the Southern airs
Unite in skies of deeper blue,
There blows a tree whose form and hue
Is like to that the orange wears.

Men say it mocks the orange tree—
'Tis no reproach and brings no shame,
For those who see must soon exclaim,
How strangely sweet the mockery!

It rivals in a winsome way
The orange flower's pure delight,
And wafts upon the wings of night
The spicy smell of far Cathay.

With grateful heart a veil of white
It gently throws on mother earth ;
When the stars smile down in silent mirth
Its glossy leaves laugh back the light.

Though loving best the Southern breeze,
That sighs in numbers as it goes,
It cheers the dreary wind that blows
With purple lips from Northern seas.

In the noon of night a song it sings,
So sweet and low, so soft and clear,
In slumber oft, I dream I hear
The flutter of a fairy's wings.

THE HAPPY DAY.

AS often as the April morn
Climbs softly up the Eastern sky,
And glimmers through the milk-white thorn,
Or dances where the violets lie,
Though wondrous fair the hills may be,
And many a grace the fields adorn,
My wayward thoughts arise and flee
To greet a future, fairer morn.

Full oft at noon, when lavish May
With myriad blossoms scents the air,
And wild birds sing and brooklets play,
As if to flout and banish care,
I feel the fragrance of the breeze,
I heed the bird's and brooklet's tune ;
And yet, though wooed by charms like these,
My fancy seeks a rarer noon.

Oft when the evening skies are thrilled
With every tint that June may lend,
And every woodland path is filled
With scents in which all perfumes blend,
Until it seems the hour has won
A charm 'neath which 'twere sin to grieve,
My soul will shun the setting sun,
To revel in a viewless eve.

Where are you now, O Happy Day?
I long to hail your waiting beam;
I marvel much at your delay,
So like the glamour of a dream.
Delay no more, but spread your wing
And hasten o'er the stormy sea,
My perished hopes come quickly bring
In perfect radiance to me.

But yet, perchance, delay is best,
Though many a vanished hope you bring,
For I can bide your coming crest,
But not endure your parting wing;

So keep for me your pinions bright ;
And fold your plumes across the wave,
And when all earthly visions blight,
Arise for me beyond the grave.

HAFIZ.

MORE pleasing than the mellow flute
Or harp e'er swept by minstrel hand,
The centuries mourn thy silent lute,
Sweet poet of the Persian land.

While roses wreathed the bubbling wine
And tender glances crowned the lay,
O happy bard, what joy was thine
When twilight hushed the noisy day?

What dark-eyed beauties bent above
With bated breath to catch each note?
For hearts could never choose but love
When love was taught by such a throat.

Thy limpid voice and glorious strains
Not always rose to mirthful ears,
The fading of thy soft refrains
Was often fraught with sighs and tears.

Though louder notes perchance may swell
And force the languid pulse to start,
'Tis not the epic strain that dwell
The longest in the human heart.

Alas, thy voice has ceased to soar
And chase sweet echo as it flies :
Thy wooing tones will draw no more
The jetty lids from dreaming eyes.

The Persian breezes wail in flight,
In Ispahan the roses weep
While nightingales bemoan the night,
And round thy grave sad vigils keep.

A DIRGE.

WITH pallid cheeks and wringing hands
And dusky garments sad and sere,
The dreary winds from Northern lands
Have come to sob at Autumn's bier ;
Upon her robe of brilliant dyes,
Behold, in chilly splendor lies
The tribute of a frozen tear.

Come, Winter, come and drop the pall
That only thou know'st how to spread ;
In tender silence let it fall
In flawless folds from foot to head ;
Within our hearts' most sacred shrine,
And guarded by a love divine
Shall live the memory of the dead !

IN HAVEN.

I HEAR the distant breakers roar ;
Their sleepless wrath can harm no more
My life-bark soon will touch the shore
Whose beauty fadeth never.
How sweetly sings the bird of peace !
Oh, let his tender note increase,
For sorrow soon shall know surcease
Forever and forever.

Oh, Love, bid me forget my fears,
The cares that fret, the wrongs of years ;
My sea-worn heart sweet harbor nears
Beyond the storm's endeavor.
And let your tresses brush my cheek,
When hearts and fondest words are weak ;
With soft caress your passion speak
Forever and forever.

Awake the smile I dreamed of old,
As warm as noontide's balmy gold,
Yet soft as moonlight faintly rolled
When summer cloudlets sever.
Your eyes are like the beacon light
That beckons through the darksome night:
At last I read my fate aright
Forever and forever.

PAUL HAMILTON HAYNE.

ALL strains are his. But most his lines
Are fraught with peace and woodland pleasures,
With bough-swing of the Georgian pines
Enwoven through the golden measures.

Beneath the purple muscadine
Sweet Fancy brings him many a vision,
Where frolic Dryads, laughing, twine
In airy cirques and songs Elysian.

Who notes the frosts that fringe his brows!
His tide of song is swelling sweeter,
With breathings of the myrtle boughs
And sunny roses in the meter.

Who cavils at the wings of Time !
They only waft him tones more tender
That he may chant in mellow rhyme
Of wildwood charms and cloudland splendor.

The winsome Nine, a lissome throng,
With dimpled smiles still linger near him ;
And still supreme in Southern song,
He pipes and millions joy to hear him.

AT THE BALL.

THEY bow at the end of the "Lancers,"
And turn to the fairest of all;—
"Shall we sue in vain for a ballad?"
They say to the Belle of the Ball.

Then a hush falls over the dancers,—
A hush they know not why;
And she seems as one who is dreaming
As she sweeps them slowly by.

The smile so lately wreathing
Her lips of deepest red
Is gone, and the feverish glitter
That flashed from her eyes has fled.

Around her witching dimples,
Where the ruby current flows,
They note with silent wonder
The lily banish the rose.

Then over the harp-strings bending,
She sings an old love song,
And the dancers gather around her,
A gay and thoughtless throng.

"What a wonderful depth of feeling!"
They whisper, and stare with surprise;
She sings, unheeding the murmur,
With a far-away look in her eyes.

She sees not the dazzling lustres,
She sees not the crowd looking on;
And the song flows on as plaintive
As the song of the dying swan.

She thinks of a gallant trooper
Who sailed to a foreign strand;
Her eyes are dim for a lover
Who fell in a distant land.

She recalls the hour of parting
Where the ships at anchor ride,

And again the martial music
Rings over the foaming tide.

Across the taffrail leaning,
He tosses a kiss through the spray ;
And the ship fades out in the hazes
That muffle the mouth of the bay.

She thinks of the day of shadows
When her heart grew numb with pain,
And the sky grew black before her
As she read the list of the slain.

Then her thoughts fly over the billows ;
She kneels by a lonely grave
Where the tall reeds shiver and quiver,
And the slender palm trees wave.

She sees the black bats flitting
Beneath the wan moonlight ;
She hears the wind low sobbing
And dying away in the night.

Lo ! these are the voices and visions
That haunt the Belle of the Ball,
Filling the room with echoes
And floating across the wall.

And when her song has ended
With a strain that rose in the air,
And fell on the wing of Silence
Like the close of an angel's prayer—

The lips of the dancers gayly
Bubble with praises ; but oh !
'Twas the wail of a heart that was breaking
They had heard, and did not know!

CHINESE GORDON.

ONWARD roll, thou mighty river,
Tell his story to the seas,
On thy breast the moon shall quiver,
On thy bosom sob the breeze.
Lo ! another Star is gleaming,
With undying lustre streaming,
Newly risen o'er the desert
From the City of Khartoum.

Chinese Gordon ! who shall sing him
Fitting songs to wreathe his name ?
Chinese Gordon! who shall bring him
Laurel leaves to crown his fame ?
When the sun of England's glory
Lights the way for song and story,
How 'twill blaze o'er gallant Gordon,
In the City of Khartoum !

O ye statesmen, ye who barter
  Manly blood and woman's wail,
How before the soldier-martyr
  Doth your pomp and pageant pale !
Whom it was your right to cherish
Ye have left alone to perish ;
Doth no vision come to haunt ye
    From the City of Khartoum ?

Onward roll, O mighty river,
  Tell his story to the seas ;
On thy breast the moonbeams quiver,
  On thy bosom sobs the breeze.
Honor to the Star new-gleaming,
Honor to the lustre streaming,
Ever waxing, never waning
    O'er the City of Khartoum !

THE PHANTOMS OF THE NIGHT.

(*Written on Christmas Eve.*)

I BEND above the hearth in vain,
The flames no longer glow,
But ever through the frozen pane
The chilling moonbeams flow ;
And floating on the silver tide
In cerements weird and white,
They come and will not be denied,
The phantoms of the night.

They wear the very guise of truth
And steal across the floor,
Ambitions of my vanished youth
And faces loved of yore ;
So wistfully they gaze on me

They pain me with their plight!
My eyes grow dim, I scarce can see
The phantoms of the night.

"Avaunt!" I cry, "no longer press
Your weary haunting cease;
I do not hope for happiness.
I only pray for peace."
But through the night they come and come
With terrors to affright;
Their cheeks are pale, their lips are dumb,
The phantoms of the night.

A LEGEND.

A BARD who oft had made the Sun-Lands ring
With lute and lay, no more of love would sing.
He said : "Of love I tire.
I long for something higher ;
A theme that will far grander glory bring !"

Then he arose, with discontented moan,
To seek some place where love was never known,
Or whence it long had vanished,
And was forever banished,
To wander in some distant land alone.

The bleak and rugged mountain crags he sought,
Whose desolation ages past had wrought ;
But the haughty peaks ascending,
Until with cloud-land blending,
Far echoed, each to each, a loving thought.

His toiling steps to somber woods he bent,
Whose mystic veil no hand had ever rent ;
But there the trees embracing,
With fond boughs interlacing,
In sighs of love the circling seasons spent.

Far bound for trackless seas he spread his sail,
With thought that love would flee the tempest's wail ;
But, though the raging surges
Kept thundering their dirges,
Wave leaped to wave, amid the roaring gale.

And when on noiseless wing came down the night,
With eyes uplift to heaven's far vaulted height,
He saw in loving clusters
The stars laugh down their lusters,
And cheer the world with one harmonious light.

The bard, at last, grown old and worn apace,
His task gave o'er, and cried, with pallid face :
" The way is long and dreary ;

I now am worn and weary.
Is love eternal and in every place ?"

And then from out the radiant realm above
Came softly down and cooed a gentle dove :
"Oh ! love is everywhere,
On land and sea and air ;
O'er all love reigns supreme, for *God is love*.

COME, O PAN.

COME, O Pan, why hast thou waited,
Why so long art thou belated?
Lo, beside the Western sea
Gayly flits the mellow bee;
Long ago the birds were mated.
Come,—the grapes hang purple-pated,
Flowers blow for garlands fated,
As of old in Arcady
Come, O Pan!

Quips and laughter unabated
Crown the cup with pleasure freighted.
I have kept a pipe for thee;
Come and swell the autumn glee,
Leading Dryads graceful-gaited,
Come, O Pan!

BONNIE BELLE.

JUST to please my Bonnie Belle
With her winsome eyes of blue
Lo, I sing a villanelle.

List the merry music swell!
Haste, ye rhymes, in measure true
Just to please my Bonnie Belle

Have a care to foot it well,
Tripping like a fairy crew;
Lo, I sing a villanelle.

Come from where the Pixies dwell,
Dance with sandals dipped in dew
Just to please my Bonnie Belle.

In her ear, the tiny shell,
Let my peerless passion sue ;
Lo, I sing a villanelle.

Will she listen ? Who can tell ?
Does she love me ? Would I knew !
Just to please my Bonnie Belle
Lo, I sing a villanelle.

SHE TOSSED TO ME A KISS.

SHE tossed to me a kiss! 'Twas night,
Yet every brooding care took flight,
The fountain leapt and laughed with glee
And all the stars leant out to see,
And wondered at my wild delight.
Though fate my sweetest hope may blight
To crown with bliss a rival knight,
One joy I have can never flee,
She tossed to me a kiss!

Should fortune guide my lance aright
That I may win her in the fight,
Oh, I will guard her tenderly
And she will never be to me
Less fair than when in beauty bright
She tossed to me a kiss!

THE PIXIES.

THE frost hath spread a shining net
Where late the autumn roses blew,
On lake and stream a seal is set
Where floating lilies charmed the view ;
So silently the wonder grew
Beneath pale Dian's mystic light,
I know my fancy whispers true,
The Pixies are abroad to-night.

When at the midnight chime are met
Together elves of every hue,
I trow the gazer will regret
That peers upon their retinue ;
For limb awry and eye askew
Have oft proclaimed a fairy's spite—
Peep slyly, gallants, lest ye rue
The Pixies are abroad to-night.

'Tis said their forms are tiny, yet
All human ills they can subdue,
Or with a wand or amulet
Can win a maiden's heart for you;
And many a blessing know to strew
To make the way to wedlock bright;
Give honor to the dainty crew,
The Pixies are abroad to-night.

ENVOY.

Prince, e'en a prince may vainly sue
Unaided by a fairy's might;
Remember Cinderella's shoe,
The Pixies are abroad to-night.

FOR LOVE.

FOR love, the valiant knight of old,
In armor bright and spirit bold,
At joust and tourney fierce would ride,
With plume and lance when heralds cried;
Though sometimes in the dust he rolled.
And furthermore 'tis even told,
The fair one still remaining cold,
Perchance the hapless wooer died
For love!

Alas! now other customs hold!
When hearts and hands are won by gold,
And true and brave must stand aside,
While Cupid lad goes hungry-eyed,
What Knight would sleep beneath the mould
For love?

THE PRAISE OF RHYME.

HOW I love the words that rhyme
Jingling gayly as they go ;
Making music like a chime
Rung in summer's amber glow !
When Aonian breezes blow
See them lightly dance in time ;
How I love the words that rhyme
Jingling gayly as they go !

Prithee, do'st thou call it crime
That I pipe their praises so,
Singing in a Southern clime ?
Surely all ye bards will know
How I love the words that rhyme,
Jingling gayly as they go !

O WAYWARD MUSE.

O WAYWARD Muse ! when I was gay,
You brought me lyrics night and day
Of birds and bees and frolic sheep,
And sunny roses on the steep
Where gleeful zephyrs lightly play.
But now, alas ! when Sorrow's sway
Hath wreathed my path with shadows gray,
No more your merry dimples peep,
O wayward Muse !

Where are you now, sweet child of May ?
Leave dewy wood and ocean spray,
The moonlit revels fairies keep,
Alone I watch the hours a-creep ;
Come guide again my lissome lay,
O wayward Muse !

NIGHT-FALL.

DEAR little star, no longer fear to peep ;
Lo ! now the day, thine enemy, has fled,
And all his brazen revelry is dead.
Take heart, and see how o'er yon Western steep
The conquered sun's fast fading banners sweep.
Why dost delay ? Go seek my lady's bed,
And with thy silver fingers wreathe her head
With tender dreams born in the upper deep.
O happy, happy star ! 'tis thine to gaze
Upon that form where all perfections dwell,
While I an outcast mourn my dreary lot ;
For pity now entreat the midnight fays
To weave about her heart a secret spell,
That near or far she may forget me not.

AMONG MY BOOKS.

AMONG my books—what rest is there
From wasting woes! what balm for care
If ills appall or clouds hang low
And drooping dim the fleeting show,
I revel still in visions rare.
At will I breathe the classic air
The wanderings of Ulysses share;
Or see the plume of Bayard flow
Among my books.

Whatever face the world may wear—
If Lillian has no smile to spare,
For others let her beauty blow,
Such favors I can well forego;
Perchance forget the frowning fair
Among my books.

A GENTLE LITTLE LADY.

A GENTLE little lady, with melting eyes of blue,
Kissed me in a dream at the middle of the night.
How happy I would be if my dream came true!

The moon through the window a silver lustre threw
When the lovely vision rose like a seraf on my sight,
A gentle little lady, with melting eyes of blue.

I dreamed that she loved me, and all my sorrow flew
Far away, like a bat, at the dawning of the light.
How happy I would be if my dream came true!

And as she bent above me it seemed to me I knew
Another who possessed each charm and beauty bright,
A gentle little lady, with melting eyes of blue.

But my sorrow soon returned, for the moments were
but few,
She lingered there before me in a radiance of white ;
How happy I would be if my dream came true !

Oh, Sweetheart, I will whisper the secret now to you ;
Yours was the presence that put my care to flight,
A gentle little lady, with melting eyes of blue ;
How happy I would be if my dream came true !

FORGET-ME-NOT.

FORGET-ME-NOT, what shall I say,
Flower of love and of light!
When the sunbeams have stolen away,
And the stars are peeping at play,
How shall I woo her to-night?
O flower too true to betray,
Wilt thou carry my message aright,
If I gather thee here to-day,
Forget-me-not?

Sweet herald, I trust thee! Pray
Shine out bonnie and bright,
Tell her my heart I lay
Before her to bloom or to blight.
Perchance for thy beauty she may
Forget-me-not!

BEFORE THE DAWN.

BEFORE the dawn begins to glow,
A ghostly company I keep ;
Across the silent room they creep,
The buried forms of friend and foe.
Amid the throng that come and go
There are two eyes that make me weep ;
Before the dawn begins to glow,
A ghostly company I keep.

Two dear dead eyes ! I love them so !
They shine like starlight on the deep
And often when I am asleep
They stoop and kiss me, bending low,
Before the dawn begins to glow.

UNDER THE FLASH OF TAPERS BRIGHT.

I LOST my heart at the ball to-night,
Gazing too long in Mabel's eyes
Under the flash of the tapers bright.

Because earth holds no fairer sight
Than Mabel breathing her low replies,
I lost my heart at the ball to-night.

Tenderly tall and gracefully slight,
A goddess, she charms both gay and wise
Under the flash of the tapers bright.

Arise, faint hope, put fear to flight,
For Mabel must know ere the starlight dies
I lost my heart at the ball to-night.

Ye stars that shine so pure and white,
  Grant me the boon that fate denies
Under the flash of the tapers bright.

Soften her soul with tender light,
  Nor let her regret when daylight hies
I lost my heart at the ball to-night
Under the flash of the tapers bright.

COME, ARCHER, COME.

COME, Archer, come and bend the bow!
The stars are faint, the winds are low;
And, where the frolic feet of spring
Have left the woodland blossoming,
With lilies flecked the brooklets flow.
Come ere the cock hath ceased to crow
His greeting to the orient glow;
The lark hath spread her dewy wing.
Come, Archer, come!

So wandered Robin to and fro,
In Sherwood forest long ago;
And still the woods are offering
A rapture that the proudest king,
In all his pomp, can never know.
Come, Archer, come!

IF SOME TRUE MAIDEN'S LOVE WERE MINE.

ALL worldly dreams I would resign,
Nor ever long for hidden lore,
If some true maiden's love were mine.

If but two eyes of blue divine
Could meet my glance forevermore,
All worldly dreams I would resign.

The clouds would show a silver line
And rainbow tints would hue them o'er,
If some true maiden's love were mine.

A jasmine tree should droop and twine
And peep within our cottage door,
All worldly dreams I would resign.

Our gems should be the dewdrop's shine,
  Our music float from larks that soar,
If some true maiden's love were mine.

Where is she now? She gives no sign,
  That loyal heart, leal to the core!
All worldly dreams I would resign
If some true maiden's love were mine.

SLEEP.

O SLEEP, good mother of enchanting dreams,
Within thy soothing arms oh let me lie,
What time the night-wind sings a lullaby,
And the moon kisses down with cooling gleams,
Mine eyelids weary of day's sultry beams;
Then let thy rarest visions come anigh,
Dead hopes fulfilled in perfect radiancy,
Whose fairness all my waking pain redeems;
With Loline let me stray through jasmine bowers,
A balmy world of love whose stars are flowers,
Where zephyrs sigh in such a tender way
They seem to breathe the words we long to say;
And when these dreams have come, good Sleep, ah then
I pray thee do not let me wake again.

WHEN THE CRICKET SINGS.

WHEN the cricket sings with elfin lyre
In autumn fields of rich attire,
How sweet to gaze, with heart at rest,
Where summer's flying feet have pressed
The glowing turf! What joy is higher?
The sunbeams stretch like golden wire
Whereon the winds at their desire
Chant choruses with happy zest
When the cricket sings.

Yet when the autumn hues expire,
And winter gales shriek out in ire,
There comes an hour more truly blest,
For Love and I, within our nest,
We heed no storm beside the fire
When the cricket sings!

IN THE SOUTHERN PINES.

OH, art thou weary of the glare
Of cities and the fevered show,
And dost thou loathe the fret and care
That through their ways forever flow?
Prithee to me give ear, for lo!
Beside a pine-clad Southern hill
There is a place to soothe thy woe,
Where sings the lonely whip-poor-will.

Thou wilt not hear the trumpets' blare,
No diva's shrill arpeggio;
No danseuse demi-nude will dare
Lorgnettes uplevelled row on row;
But purer pleasures thou shalt know,
The trembling fern, the purling rill;
For thee shall bound the startled doe
Where sings the lonely whip-poor-will.

And thou shalt greet beyond compare
  The fairest vision life can owe,
When through the calm and fragrant air
  The night shall come with stars a-glow,
  And tall magnolias all a-blow
Shall win the zephyrs to be still;
  All this is thine if thou wilt go
Where sings the lonely whip-poor-will.

ENVOY.

Oh, Prince, I pray this boon bestow
  On one unlearned in courtier-skill,
Come with me now and fear no foe
  Where sings the lonely whip-poor-will.

BEYOND THE NIGHT.

BEYOND the night no withered rose
Shall mock the later bud that blows,
Nor lily blossom e'er shall blight,
But all shall gleam more pure and white
Than starlight on the Arctic snows.
Sigh not when daylight dimmer grows
And life a turbid river flows,
For all is sweetness—all is light
Beyond the night.

Oh, haste, sweet hour that no man knows;
Uplift us from our cumbering woes
Where joy and peace shall crown the right,
And perished hopes shall blossom bright—
To aching hearts bring sweet repose
Beyond the night.

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